

REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are pending in the present patent application. Claims 1, 13, 15-18, 24, 36, 38-43, 45, and 46 stand rejected; and claims 2-12, 14, 19-23, 25-35, 37, and 44 stand objected to. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 14, 18, 21, 24, 25, and 37 have been amended. This application continues to include claims 1-46.

The Examiner has objected to claims 2-12, 14, 19-23, 25-35, 37, and 44 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but has indicated that claims 2-12, 14, 19-23, 25-35, 37, and 44 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability regarding claims 2-12, 14, 19-23, 25-35, 37, and 44. Applicants have so amended claims 2 and 25, and accordingly believe claims 2-12 and 25-35 to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection to claims 2-12 and 25-35 be withdrawn.

In addition, in view of Applicants' response, set forth below, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to claims 14, 19-23, 37, and 44.

Claims 1, 18, and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being unpatentable over Ikeda, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0155923 A1 (hereinafter, Ikeda). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 18, and 24 in view of the following.

Ikeda is directed to a providing a connecting structure for a carriage and a driving belt in a serial scan type recording apparatus that suppresses attenuated vibration (paragraph 17). Ikeda discloses a carriage 50 supported by a guide shaft 81 for reciprocally scanning the

carriage perpendicular to the conveying direction of the recording sheet (paragraph 43).

Carriage 50 is driven by a carriage motor mounted on the chassis 8 through a timing belt 83 (paragraph 44). On the back side of the carriage 50, a belt holder 59 is fixed while nipping the timing belt 83; a damper 71, which is an elastic member for attenuating vibrations from a driving system and making the transmission of the vibration to the carriage 50 difficult, is directly fixed to the back of the carriage 50; and belt holder 59 is mounted by a mounting member 72 through damper 71 (paragraph 51). The damper 71 is interposed between the belt holder 59 and the carriage portion 5 (paragraph 52).

Applicants believe that claims 1, 18, and 24 patentably define Applicants' invention over Ikeda, for at least the reasons set forth below.

Claim 1 is directed to an interface device for attaching a printhead carrier to a carrier drive belt. As amended, claim 1 recites, in part, an isolator coupled between said belt holder and said printhead carrier, said isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of said printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to said printhead carrier.

In the Response to Arguments, the Examiner asserts that Ikeda discloses that the belt holder is mounted by a mounting member through the damper, "which discloses a directionally dependent filtering of vibrations as claimed."

However, Applicants respectfully submit that Ikeda simply does not disclose, teach, or suggest anything akin to directionally dependent filtering, much less along a main scan direction of the printhead carrier. For example, the Ikeda damper 71 and belt holder 59 are depicted as being symmetric, and Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest otherwise, which

support's Applicants' position that Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of the printhead carrier.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner point out, with specificity, where the Ikeda publication discloses directionally dependent filtering, so as to allow Applicants to fully understand the Examiner's position, and to thereby allow Applicants to fully prosecute the present application.

Notwithstanding the above, in contrast to claim 1, Ikeda discloses a damper 71, which is an elastic member for attenuating vibrations from a driving system and making the transmission of the vibration to carriage 50 difficult, and which is directly fixed to the back of the carriage 50 (paragraph 50). Damper 71 is interposed between carriage portion 5 and belt holder 59, which is attached to timing belt 83, which are made of materials that attenuate vibration (paragraph 51).

However, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest that the damper 71 is configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of the printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier. Rather, the damper 71 is disclosed as being for attenuating vibrations, but without any mention of a directionality aspect such as might disclose, teach, or suggest directionally dependent filtering, much less along a main scan direction, as recited in claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that there is simply no aspect taught by Ikeda that pertains to the claim 1 limitation of directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction, i.e., filtering that is dependent upon a direction that is along a main scan direction. Rather, Ikeda merely discloses that vibrations may be attenuated, without in any manner

disclosing, teaching, or suggesting that the attenuation depends on the direction of carriage 50 in the main scan direction, e.g., different as between left-to-right and right-to-left movements of carriage 50 in the main scan direction. Ikeda simply does not disclose anything to suggest that the attenuation caused by damper 71 depends upon direction, such as might otherwise disclose directionally dependent filtering, as that term is used in Applicants' claims and specification, along a main scan direction of the printhead carrier.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 1. Claim 1 is thus believed allowable in its present form.

Claim 18 is directed to a method for attaching a printhead carrier to a carrier drive belt. As amended, claim 18 recites, in part, coupling an isolator between said belt holder and said printhead carrier, said isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of said printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to said printhead carrier.

Claim 18 is believed allowable for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 24 is directed to an imaging apparatus. As amended, claim 24 recites, in part, an isolator coupled between said belt holder and said printhead carrier, said isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of said printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to said printhead carrier.

Claim 24 is believed allowable for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants believe that claims 1, 18, and 24 are in condition for allowance in their present form, and thus respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 18, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) be withdrawn.

Claims 13 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda in view of Ikeda, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0048325 (hereinafter, Ikeda2). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 13 and 36 in view of the following.

Ikeda2 is directed to suppressing the positional deviation of a carriage, while attenuating vibrations transmitted from the driving source of the carriage (paragraph 13). Ikeda2 discloses that a carriage 50 is driven by the carriage motor 80, which is fixed to the chassis 8 through a timing belt 83 (paragraph 32). The structure for connecting the carriage 50 (rear cover 60) and the timing belt 83 includes a belt holder 59 fixed to the timing belt 83; two dumpers 61 that attenuate vibration transmitted from the driving system of the carriage 50 through the timing belt 83; and a fixing member 62 that fixes the dumpers 61 to the belt holder 59 (paragraph 39).

Each axial portion 59a of the belt holder 59 is inserted into the hollow portion 61a of the damper 61, and the structure is arranged to connect the belt holder 59 and the rear cover 60 by inserting the axial portion 59a of the belt holder 59 into the damper fixing hole 60c of the rear cover 60 through the damper 61, thus making it possible to connect the belt holder 59 and the rear cover 60 reliably without impeding the attenuation effect of the damper 61 (paragraph 43). Two dampers 61 are arranged in parallel in the traveling direction of the carriage 50, and therefore structured so that the attenuation effect is larger in the direction,

which is not in parallel to the traveling direction of the carriage 50, that is, more specifically, the direction at right angles to the traveling direction of the carriage 50, than the attenuation effect produced in the traveling direction of the carriage 50 (paragraph 48).

Claim 13 is directed to the interface device of claim 1, said isolator being an asymmetrical isolator and said printhead carrier defining a receptacle for receiving said asymmetrical isolator, said printhead carrier having a latch for engaging a latch slot formed in said asymmetrical isolator to retain said asymmetrical isolator in said receptacle.

Claim 13 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 1. For example, as set forth above with respect to claim 1, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of said printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 1. Ikeda2 does not make up for the deficiency of Ikeda as applied to claim 1, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner relies upon Ikeda2 as assertedly disclosing the subject matter recited in claim 13.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Ikeda2, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 1, and hence, do not disclose, teach, or suggest claim 13, which incorporates by reference the subject matter of claim 1.

Ikeda2 does not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 13, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner asserts that it would be obvious as a matter of design choice to make the isolator an asymmetrical shape, relying on *In re Dailey*, 357 F.2d 669, 149 USPQ 47 (Fed. Cir. 1966).

As set forth in MPEP §2144.04(IV)(B) regarding *In re Dailey*, the configuration of a container was obvious “*absent persuasive evidence that the particular configuration of the claimed container was significant.*” (Emphasis added).

However, as set forth in Applicants’ specification, a symmetrical carrier isolator may not provide acceptable dampening in both of carrier scan directions 78a and 78b (see Applicants’ specification at page 9, lines 12-13).

In addition, Applicants’ Fig. 3 illustrates a “significant” reduction in Y-direction error using an asymmetrical isolator as compared to a symmetrical isolator (see Applicants’ specification from page 9, line 31 to page 10, line 25, and in particular, page 10, line 5, emphasis added).

Accordingly, the “asymmetrical” configuration of the isolator of claim 13 is significant, and hence, it would not be an obvious matter of design choice to make the isolator an asymmetrical shape.

Claim 13 is thus believed allowable in its own right.

Claim 36 is believed allowable for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 13.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants believe that claims 13 and 36 are in condition for allowance in their present form, and thus respectfully request that the rejection of claims 13 and 36 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 15 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda in view of Allen, et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0153467 A1

(hereinafter, Allen). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 15 and 38 in view of the following.

Allen is directed to elastomeric damping elements (paragraph 0002), and discloses an elastomeric damping element having an elongated trapezoidal cross-sectional shape, and that another elastomeric material that has different damping characteristics than the outer body of the element may be poured into the element so that it solidifies inside of it (paragraph 0007).

Applicants believe that claims 15 and 38 patentably define Applicants' invention over Ikeda and Allen, taken alone or in combination, for at least the reasons set forth below.

Claim 15 is directed to the interface device of claim 1, said isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties.

Claim 15 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 1. For example, as set forth above with respect to claim 1, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of said printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 1. Allen does not make up for the deficiency of Ikeda as applied to claim 1, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner relies upon Allen as assertedly disclosing the subject matter recited in claim 15.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Allen, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 1, and hence, do not disclose, teach, or suggest claim 15, which incorporates by reference the subject matter of claim 1.

In addition, Allen does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties, as recited in claim 15. In rejecting

claim 15, the Examiner relies on Allen paragraph 0007. However, paragraph 0007 discloses an elastomeric damping element having an elongated trapezoidal cross-sectional shape into which another elastomeric material that has different damping characteristics may be poured.

Applicants respectfully submit that the different damping characteristic disclosed by Allen does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties, since it is known in the art that stiffness properties and damping characteristics are two different physical properties of a material. For example, it is known in the art that stiffness pertains to the material's ability to resist deformation, whereas damping pertains to a material's propensity to absorb energy when that material is deformed, e.g., resulting in hysteresis losses.

Allen thus does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Allen, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 15.

Claim 15 is thus believed allowable in its own right.

Claim 38 is directed to the imaging apparatus of claim 24, said isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties.

Claim 38 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 24. For example, as set forth above with respect to claim 24, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator coupled between the belt holder and the printhead carrier, the isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of the printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited

in claim 24. Allen does not make up for the deficiency of Ikeda as applied to claim 24, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner relies upon Allen as assertedly disclosing the subject matter recited in claim 38.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Allen, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 24, and hence, do not disclose, teach, or suggest claim 38, which incorporates by reference the subject matter of claim 24.

In addition, claim 38 is believed allowable in its own right for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 15.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants believe that claims 15 and 38 are in condition for allowance in their present form, and thus respectfully request that the rejection of claims 15 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 16, 17, 39, and 40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda in view of Kinoshita, JP 04-131267 (hereinafter, Kinoshita). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 16, 17, 39, and 40 in view of the following.

Kinoshita is directed to suppressing vibration, and discloses a method wherein a junction mechanism for binding a first structure member with a second structure member is provided with a tongue-form part fastening the first structure member and an elastic member which is fitted through a projection of the second structure member and engaged with a rib part. (Abstract)

Applicants believe that claims 16, 17, 39, and 40 patentably define Applicants' invention over Ikeda in view of Kinoshita, for at least the reasons set forth below.

Claim 16 is directed to the interface device of claim 1, said isolator being made from a single material having multiple stiffness properties.

Claim 16 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 1. For example, as set forth above with respect to claim 1, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 1. Kinoshita does not make up for the deficiency of Ikeda as applied to claim 1, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner relies upon Kinoshita as assertedly disclosing the subject matter recited in claim 16.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Kinoshita, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 1, and hence, do not disclose, teach, or suggest claim 16, which incorporates by reference the subject matter of claim 1.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that Ikeda and Kinoshita, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 16, as set forth in their Response mailed May 25, 2006.

For example, in contrast to an isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties, Kinoshita discloses that the upper case claw 1 is “made of a material having large damping properties, such as elastomer- or rubber-based plastic” (Abstract), which makes clear that Kinoshita discloses the upper case claw 1 being made from a single material having a single stiffness property.

In the Response to Arguments, the Examiner asserts that rubber is known to have multiple stiffness properties that can be affected by an amount of hardener or additives in a portion of the isolator.

However, regardless of the veracity of such an assertion, Applicants respectfully submit that Kinoshita simply does not disclose, teach, or suggest varying an amount of hardener or additives in a portion of the isolator, much less in an attempt to achieve multiple stiffness properties, or wherein an isolator is made from a single material having multiple stiffness properties, as recited in claim 16. Rather, Kinoshita simply discloses that the upper case claw 1 is made of a material that has large damping properties, such as elastomer or rubber based plastic, without any mention of an amount of hardener or additives in a portion of upper case claw 1.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Kinoshita, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 16.

Claim 16 is thus believed allowable in its own right.

Claim 17 is directed to the interface device of claim 16, said isolator being made from an elastomeric material having at least one of a different amount of hardener, additives, air bubbles and holes located in a portion of said isolator.

Claim 17 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 1 for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 16, and also due to its dependence on otherwise allowable intervening claim 16.

In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that Ikeda and Kinoshita, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter recited in claim 17, as set forth in their Response mailed May 25, 2006.

For example, in contrast to an isolator being made from an elastomeric material having at least one of a different amount of hardener, additives, air bubbles and holes located in a portion of the isolator, Kinoshita discloses that the upper case claw 1 is “made of a material having large damping properties, such as elastomer- or rubber-based plastic” (Abstract, emphasis added), but does not even mention or otherwise disclose, teach, or suggest a hardener or additives, much less a different amount of hardener, additives, air bubbles and holes located in a portion of the isolator.

In the Response to Arguments, the Examiner asserts that rubber is known to have multiple stiffness properties that can be affected by an amount of hardener or additives in a portion of the isolator.

However, regardless of the veracity of such an assertion, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited prior art reference, Kinoshita, simply does not disclose, teach, or suggest a hardener or additives, much less an elastomeric material having at least one of a different amount of hardener, additives, air bubbles and holes located in a portion of the isolator. Rather, Kinoshita simply discloses that the upper case claw 1 is made of a material that has large damping properties, such as elastomer or rubber based plastic, without any mention of a different amount of hardener or additives in a portion of upper case claw 1.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Kinoshita, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 17.

Claim 17 is thus believed allowable in its own right.

Claim 39 is directed to imaging apparatus of claim 24, said isolator being made from multiple materials having different stiffness properties.

Claim 39 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 24. For example, as set forth above with respect to claim 24, Ikeda does not disclose, teach, or suggest an isolator coupled between the belt holder and said printhead carrier, the isolator being configured to provide directionally dependent filtering along a main scan direction of the printhead carrier of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 24. Kinoshita does not make up for the deficiency of Ikeda as applied to claim 24, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner relies upon Kinoshita as assertedly disclosing the subject matter recited in claim 39.

Accordingly, Ikeda and Kinoshita, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 24, and hence, do not disclose, teach, or suggest claim 39, which incorporates by reference the subject matter of claim 24.

In addition, claim 39 is believed allowable in its own right for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 16.

Claim 40 is directed to the imaging apparatus of claim 39, said isolator being made from an elastomeric material having at least one of a different amount of hardener, additives, air bubbles and holes located in a portion of said isolator.

Claim 40 is believed allowable due to its dependence on otherwise allowable base claim 24 for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 39, and also due to its dependence on otherwise allowable intervening claim 39.

In addition, claim 40 is believed allowable in its own right for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 17.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants believe that claims 16, 17, 39, and 40 are in condition for allowance in their present form, and thus respectfully request that the rejection of claims 16, 17, 39, and 40 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

Claims 41-43, 45, and 46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda2. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 41-43, 45, and 46 in view of the following.

Claim 41 is directed to an imaging apparatus. Claim 41 recites, in part, a printhead carrier having a receptacle configured for mounting said isolator, said receptacle having a first thrust wall and a second thrust wall spaced apart from said first thrust wall along a bi-directional main scan direction of said printhead carrier, said isolator being retained between and in engagement with said first thrust wall and said second thrust wall, *wherein a structural geometry of said second thrust wall is different than a structural geometry of said first thrust wall to adjust an amount of dampening in each direction along said bi-directional main scan direction to provide directionally dependent filtering of vibrations propagating to said printhead carrier.*

In contrast to claim 41, Ikeda2 discloses that two dampers 61 are arranged in parallel in the traveling direction of the carriage 50, and therefore structured so that the attenuation effect is larger in the direction that is not in parallel to the traveling direction of the carriage 50, that is, more specifically, the direction at right angles to the traveling direction of the

carriage 50, than the attenuation effect produced in the traveling direction of the carriage 50 (paragraph 48).

Thus, in contrast to being able to adjust an amount of dampening in each direction along the bi-directional main scan direction to provide directionally dependent filtering of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 41, Ikeda 2 discloses that the attenuation effect is larger in the direction at right angles to the traveling direction than the attenuation effect produced in the traveling direction.

Applicants respectfully submit that each direction along the bi-directional main scan direction refers to parallel opposite directions along the same axis, as is known in the art – for example, see Applicants’ specification at page 7, lines 10-17, referring to main scanning direction 78 with left-to-right movement being designated direction 78a and right-to-left movement being designated direction 78b.

Accordingly, rather than being able to adjust an amount of dampening in each direction along the bi-directional main scan direction, Ikeda2 discloses the attenuation being different as between directions that are at right angles to each other.

In addition, the Ikeda2 structure that generally corresponds to the thrust walls (the two structural portions designated with reference character 59a in Fig. 5) are not depicted as having a different geometry, but rather, are depicted as being of the same geometry, and hence, Ikeda 2 does not disclose, teach, or suggest wherein a structural geometry of the second thrust wall is different than a structural geometry of the first thrust wall to adjust an amount of dampening in each direction along the bi-directional main scan direction to provide

directionally dependent filtering of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 41.

Further, since the asserted first and second thrust walls (figure at the bottom of page 6 of the Office Action) are depicted as being generally at right angles to each other, Applicants respectfully submit that it is clear that the asserted thrust walls of Ikeda2 does not disclose, teach, or suggest wherein a structural geometry of the second thrust wall is different than a structural geometry of the first thrust wall to adjust an amount of dampening in each direction along the bi-directional main scan direction to provide directionally dependent filtering of vibrations propagating to the printhead carrier, as recited in claim 41, since only one of the thrust walls faces a corresponding Ikeda2 direction along the bi-directional scan direction.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Ikeda2 does not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 41. Claim 41 is thus believed allowable in its present form.

Claims 42, 43, 45, and 46 are believed allowable due to their dependence, directly or indirectly, on otherwise allowable base claim 41. In addition, claims 42, 43, 45, and 46 further and patentably define the invention over Ikeda2.

For example, claim 43 is directed to the imaging apparatus of claim 41, said second thrust wall being shorter in length than said first thrust wall.

Applicants respectfully submit that Ikeda2 does not disclose, teach, or suggest the second thrust wall being shorter in length than the first thrust wall. Rather, the Ikeda2 structure that generally corresponds to the two thrust walls (the two structural portions designated with reference character 59a in Fig. 5) are not depicted as having a different

geometry, but instead are depicted as being similar. In addition, Ikeda2 does not otherwise disclose, teach, or suggest that the second thrust wall being shorter in length than the first thrust wall.

Accordingly, claim 43 is believed allowable in its own right.

Claim 46 is directed to the imaging apparatus of claim 41, said isolator being asymmetrical.

Ikeda2 does not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 46, nor does the Examiner assert as much. Rather, the Examiner asserts that it would be obvious as a matter of design choice to make the isolator an asymmetrical shape, relying on *In re Dailey*, 357 F.2d 669, 149 USPQ 47 (Fed. Cir. 1966).

As set forth in MPEP §2144.04(IV)(B) regarding *In re Dailey*, the configuration of a container was obvious “*absent persuasive evidence that the particular configuration of the claimed container was significant.*” (Emphasis added).

However, as set forth in Applicants’ specification, a symmetrical carrier isolator may not provide acceptable dampening in both of carrier scan directions 78a and 78b (see Applicants’ specification at page 9, lines 12-13).

In addition, Applicants’ Fig. 3 illustrates a “significant” reduction in Y-direction error using an asymmetrical isolator as compared to a symmetrical isolator (see Applicants’ specification from page 9, line 31 to page 10, line 25, in particular, page 10, line 5, emphasis added).

Accordingly, the “asymmetrical” configuration of the isolator of claim 46 is significant, and hence, it would not be an obvious matter of design choice to make the isolator an asymmetrical shape.

Claim 46 is thus believed allowable in its own right.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants believe that claims 41-43, 45, and 46 are in condition for allowance in their present form, and thus respectfully request that the rejection of claims 41-43, 45, and 46 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) be withdrawn.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the appended claims. The appended claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (317) 894-0801.

Respectfully submitted,

/Paul C. Gosnell/

Paul C. Gosnell
Registration No. 46,735

Attorney for Applicants

RKA14/ts

TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.
12029 E. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46229
Telephone: 317-894-0801
Facsimile: 317-894-0803

Electronically Filed: November 22, 2006